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Orindawoods Tennis News

Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; Office Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat./Sun.: 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., www.orindawoodstennis.com
"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it – Celia, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene IV

Orindawoods Senior Championships

It was another good year for the Senior Tournament, except for a HUGE amount of very disruptive rain. Still, Dave and Keith scrambled and did their best to get in as many matches as possible. We were able to complete the older divisions (all but one match) by Friday noon, only one day behind. Then more rain hit, and the younger divisions (35s-55s) were off to a wild weekend of rain delays, squeegeeing under questionable skies (i.e. in the rain, at times: futility defined), and intense radar watching (I know all the best weather sites: you simply look until you find one that says what you want it to say. Works for me).

Summing it all up, it was a great year for the undefeated and untied Orindawoods Squeegee Team. Many thanks to Dave, Lee, Chet, Kendall and Keith for getting those courts dry in record time. These squeegee artists -- no masters -- move so fast there is steam coming up off the court in their wake. Sizzling!

As for the tennis, it was grand. Amazing how well all these people play, from thirty-five to ninety years old. Stunningly, our biggest division was the Men's 85s. That's right, these guys are playing singles, and playing it well, at 85 and over. Our winner, Alex Swetka, is almost 90 and didn't drop a set (I knew we should have seeded that guy, but how do you seed a ninety-year old?). It was fun to hear the various player's stories. During one rain delay, I heard stories of how some of these guys played Riggs, Kramer, and Gonzales. The old legends, even back when I was a kid. And some how, we were able to finish the tournament, rain delays and all. Ok, we had to go over our scheduled days slightly, but only slightly.

There were several Club members who played the tournament this year. John Hartman and Jack Frankel were finalists in the 80 doubles, Eric Peterson made a great showing in the 45s challenging the top seed after winning an earlier round. Dave Zirkle and Alan Smith played very well in the 55 Doubles. Dave also played in the 55 singles, capturing a round and putting a bit of a scare in the seed he played next round.

Thanks again to Dave Moss, Ted Yim, and all the others that helped with the tournament, and all the tournaments over the years, especially Ida The Treat-Maker. No one makes treats like Ida! No one.

Here At The Club

Tennis In Your Backyard

Tennis, tennis, tennis. That's what we are about here at Orindawoods. We like to think of the Club as your own backyard, your place to play. In fact, the Club is better than your back forty, because all your friends are here. What we share is a love of tennis, a desire to exercise and to have a lot of fun.

That's tennis in your backyard. Naturally, your love of tennis can take many forms. We have competitive teams, social events, weekly games, drop-in play and great instruction. There are games for seniors, clinics for kids and everything in-between. It is all here.

So Celia has it right, "I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it." Come out and play!

Ace It!

Let's talk Ace It! our annual breast cancer awareness fund raiser. The date is June 24th, and what a great way to spend a day at the Club, and do some good for women and families affected by this terrible disease. Every penny you donate goes right to the Carol Ann Reed Breast Center. The day starts with a warm-up, followed by the Tour of Pros clinics, a great lunch on the deck, and concluding with Ace It! Tournament. For more information and to get a registration form, come by the Club, or go on our website and download a registration form. Join us!

Cardio Tennis

As we mentioned last month, we are planning to start offering CardioTennis classes. CardioTennis is fun, action packed hour of exercise (using tennis as the format). The idea is to have a warm-up period of about 10 minutes, 40 minutes of working out in your target heart range, and a 10 minute cool down. It is a lot like an aerobics class, but a whole lot more fun, because you get to play tennis too. Keep in mind, this is not a tennis lesson, there will be no stroke instruction, just a great workout and plenty of fun. It can be said for the benefit of your game, that you will hit a lot of balls, so it's good practice, but that is not our focus. It's all fun and exercise. The cost is \$10 a class. Class size is limited to 6-8 people. We're still planning the schedule. Contact Keith for info.

End of an Era***The Final Senior Tournament***

I want to thank all the members of the Club for supporting the Orindawoods Senior Championships over the last 20 years or so. It has been a great event (see above). Special thanks must go to our Referee of the past 10 years, Dave Moss. What an amazing job Dave has done over the years. Thanks so much Dave.

We have decided to make this year's event, the 2006 Orindawoods Senior Championships our final senior tournament. This decision has been taken for primarily three reasons: 1) Dave, our referee, is retiring from the position, 2) the tournament is a great deal of work, way beyond the thirteen-hour days for the seven consecutive days the tournament runs and thus it is very difficult on our staff and 3) the tournament is hard on the Club's membership, who graciously give up the courts for an entire week. With the great growth that has taken place in the membership, both in terms of number of memberships and participation, we feel that it is time to bring this Orindawoods tradition to a close (and start some new traditions with our new Club). Add to that that the school district has change spring break (when many members are out of town), so that it no long coincides with the tournament (depriving us of our ace front desk staffer, Tamar McCollom), and it all adds up to enough for us. It has been a most wonderful ride.

To those people that have played the tournament, I want to thank them for their participation and support. I will miss seeing all the familiar faces each year from all over Northern California. A wise person once told me with every decision there are gains and losses. This decision involves some clear losses, but taken on the whole, it is a gain for the Club and it's membership.

Decision Making, Lessons From The Best

I was watching a match at our Senior Tournament last month and a player in the 65s hit a very strong approach shot down the line. His opponent ran over and hit a beautiful backhand up the line for a winner, passing the on-rushing player. Was this point decided by a winner or an error?

It is a question that would not even enter the mind of most observers. Technically, on the stats sheet, the passing shot was clearly a winner. However, if the net rusher had simply realized how good his approach shot was, he would have known that the only shot his opponent could have hit was up the line, and he would have been standing there, waiting for an easy volley. Instead, he stood in the middle of the court (which at one level makes sense, but actually wasn't even close to the middle of where his opponent could hit into), thus losing the point. He played is safe, but safe wasn't safe, was it?

It is somewhat comforting to know that even the best players in Northern California make these positioning errors from time to time. Still, as players, it is disturbing that we seem to be always finding ways to lose points we have essentially already won. And I am not talking about missing an easy shot, we do that enough. No, here we are discussing points where our opponent hits a "great" shot, often a winner, when in fact, it should have been an easy shot for us if we had just read the situation correctly.

When I was in Indian Wells at the Pacific Life Open, I was amazed at how often the very best players in the world essentially played only half the court. At that level, everyone hits the ball so well, that you probably only can cover half the court anyway, the trick is picking the right half (or was that the left half?). At our level, here at the Club, perhaps we don't move as well as a twenty-something touring pro (ya think?), so perhaps it would benefit us to only cover half the court too.

So that begs the question, which half do we cover? The deeper and harder your shot, the more your opponent has to move sideways or back to cover it, the more likely the ball will be returned up the line (they are late, cross court is much more difficult). The shorter (and lower) your shot, the more they are reaching forward, the harder it is to hit down the line, and therefore the more likely the ball will be crosscourt. So if you hit a drop shot or an angle, cover the angle. If they are backing up at the baseline, watch for the lob (step back). They're moving forward, stepping into the shot, look for the drive (get closer). Most of us, if we think about it, know these things, the problem is that we don't believe what we see. And it is hard to remember to even think about this stuff until the ball goes flying by us. "Damn, what was I thinking?" Probably nothing, or something worse.

What gets in the way of making decisions? Fear, and fear of being wrong, in particular. Admittedly, covering half the court is scary. We can't help but ask, "Whoa, there sure is a lot of court over there. What if they hit it over there, to the other half?" Well, the answer kind of goes like this, "You lose that point."

Tennis is a game of probabilities, or percentages. Each point should be played like an educated guess, or

gamble. Get the best odds you can and go for it. Let the other guy play the "long shots." See, that is what makes tennis different from gambling, the long shots don't pay more. All points count the same, so hitting a long shot does little for your opponent except perhaps, float their ego a bit. (Believe me, there

Quote of the Month
"For every problem there is an answer that is clear, simple and wrong"

is plenty of that going on out there – it's the game of choice for many a loser).

At Indian Wells, I saw lots of points where Player A picked half of the court to stand on. When the Player B was able to hit into the other half, Player A looked bad, real bad. When the Player B couldn't come up with the goods, Player A was left with a very easy shot. These easy shots were much more common. But our mind plays tricks on us. I saw so many points down in the desert where the net person got passed, and then I looked at the statistics for the match and the net person won 75% of his net approaches. We just don't remember as well the points where the properly positioned player had a very easy shot for a winner. Or when the opponent went for the impossible shot, and guess what, since it was impossible, they missed.

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions. Making the right decisions is very difficult in tennis, as in life. The trouble is, the "right" decision can often only be determined after the fact. The proverbial Monday Morning Quarterback. It is easy to be brilliant after the outcome; the trouble is that we have to make decisions in the present tense, not in 20-20 hindsight. How often have we heard it said Player A was unbeatable, as if anointed by God to be invincible. I'm sure that player, no matter how well she was playing, didn't feel unbeatable at the time. Confident perhaps, but the result a forgone conclusion, extremely doubtful. Most worry how it might all slip away. In hindsight, perhaps she was a goddess, but in the moment, no one is unstoppable (except on NFL films. You'd think those old Packer, Steeler, or 49er teams couldn't possibly have ever lost a Super Bowl, when in fact, they just had a great day and now they're gods for all posterity).

Unfortunately, our society seems to be obsessed with the "right decision", and news shows, talk radio, newspapers, sportscasters and court rooms spend unbelievable amounts of time analyzing decisions that often had to be made in a split second with very limited knowledge (but often the best knowledge available). Fortunately on the tennis court, unlike some other areas (driving the freeway, crossing the street, commanding a squad in Iraq, or being President), these are not life and death decisions, but they are decisions that need to be made. To do nothing is often worse, and frankly, not an option. After all, doing nothing is something, by default (standing still in the middle of the court, was not a very good way of playing the net in our first example above, as the Men's 65 player discovered).

Somewhere deep at fault is this assumption many of us are cursed with, that "all points are winnable" if we had just made the right decision, the right shot, played the right strategy. Again, this is assuming that we know what our opponent is going to do, before they even know what they are going to do, and they can even do it with any regularity, a totally crazy notion. You will never be a winner if you think this way. As I discussed in past months, you have to lose certain points in order to win the majority of points.

Often in lessons I am asked after a point is played, "What should I have done?" I know the student wants to know, "How could I have won that point (every single time)?" I try to answer in a way that gives the student the best chance of winning, but of course I can't give them the guarantee we all so desperately want (to never lose). If I could, you might have trouble booking a lesson with me, I'd be so busy. For the purposes of this article, the best chance means being in the best possible position. If you can cover the part of the court where they are most likely to hit, you have the best chance of winning the largest possible number of points. That will lead to winning the largest number of matches, of becoming your highest possible rating or ranking, and maximizing your potential and your enjoyment.

It is this fear of making the wrong decision that freezes us, leading us to do nothing, or "play it safe," when safe isn't safe at all, just the most obvious (but wrong) choice. As a wise person once said, "For every situation, there is an answer that is clear, simple and wrong."

I think we all fear that if we don't think every point (or match, tournament or league) is winnable, that we are not trying our hardest, that we are somehow not putting out our best effort. This preoccupation misses the point and leaves us distracted by results and doomed to a tennis career of impossible tasks. It really all comes back to focus, and that means staying in the present, not the past or future. Don't look back even as far as the point you just won or lost, do what you can do to give you the best chance to win this point, right now.



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So make decisions, move to cover the part of the court you think they can hit most easily into, be ready, and see what happens. The goal isn't to be right, or to win, but to do the best we can with limited information, and our limited skills and talent. Put it on the line. Take action. Make the call. Take a stand. Learn the lesson. And leave the nay saying to the naysayers.

It is not the critic who counts; not the one who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. Credit belongs to the one who is actually in the arena...

-- Teddy Roosevelt

Being a critic is easy. That's why there are so many Monday Morning Quarterbacks, and so few good game-day quarterbacks. Few have the stomach for calculated risk.

And if you are playing Roger Federer, or a very hot opponent, and they can hit those amazingly impossible shots? Well, at least you made them beat you the most difficult way, rather than leaving the court undefended where it was easiest for them to hit. And be patient, be smart, act in your long-term best interest. Even Roger comes down to earth every once in a while. Weather the storm and move on. That's making the best decision. Good luck out there!

3.5 Ladies Senior Playoffs

Our Ladies 3.5 Seniors team won the Diablo North playoff in March and are going on to play in the Districts at Stanford on April 28-30. Good luck ladies! A win there would take us on to Sectionals in Carmel. Go, go, go!

Monday Night Team Tennis!

Yes, it is getting closer to summer and our wonderful Monday Team Tennis season. We will begin on June 19 and run through August 21. Too much fun! MTT is doubles, mixed doubles, triples, dinner, social, competitive, exciting and just way too good to miss. Call Keith to register. Cost: \$40 (\$60 non-OW)

Rain, Did It Rain Last Month?

Yes, there was plenty of rain in March and April, and that means lots of make-up matches in May and June. Consult the Calendar on the website (or the glass case) to see what days will be busy. Tip: then make reservations.

Summer Junior Tennis at Orindawoods

<i>Week 1</i>	<i>June 12-15</i>	<i>Tennis Camp</i>
<i>Week 2</i>	<i>June 19-22</i>	<i>Tennis Camp</i>
<i>Week 3</i>	<i>June 26-29</i>	<i>Wet and Wild Camp</i>
<i>Week 4</i>	<i>July 3-6 (no class on 7/4)</i>	<i>Tennis Camp</i>
<i>Week 5</i>	<i>July 10-13</i>	<i>Tennis Camp</i>
<i>Week 6</i>	<i>July 17-22</i>	<i>Wet and Wild Camp</i>
<i>Week 7</i>	<i>July 24-27</i>	<i>Tennis Camp</i>
<i>Week 8</i>	<i>July 31-Aug. 3</i>	<i>Tennis Camp</i>

Tennis Camp Weeks' Schedule:

<i>Lil' Ones</i>	<i>Ages 4-6</i>	<i>Tues & Thurs</i>	<i>11:15-12noon</i>	<i>\$30/\$35 non OW</i>
<i>Tennis Clubbers</i>	<i>Ages 7-10</i>	<i>Mon-Thurs</i>	<i>12noon-1:30p</i>	<i>\$90/\$100 nonOW</i>
<i>Big Boomers</i>	<i>Ages 11+</i>	<i>Mon-Thurs</i>	<i>1:30-3:30p</i>	<i>\$115/\$130 non</i>

Wet and Wild Weeks' Schedule:

<i>Tennis Clubbers</i>	<i>Ages 7-10</i>	<i>Mon-Thurs</i>	<i>12noon-3 pm</i>	<i>\$165/\$180 non OW</i>
<i>Big Boomers</i>	<i>Ages 11+</i>	<i>Mon-Thurs</i>	<i>1:00-4 pm</i>	<i>\$165/\$180 non OW</i>

Contact Patric for more information: 254-1065 or patricTennis@yahoo.com

Weekly Club Drop-in Events

Ladies' Clinic, every Tuesday morning 9:30-10:30 a.m. w/ Patric. Cost: \$5

Ladies' Playday, every Tuesday morning 10:30- 12 noon, Courts 1 and 3

Men's Clinic, every Thursday morning 9:30-10:30 a.m. w/ Patric. Cost \$5

Men's Day, every Thursday morning 10-12 noon, Courts 4-7, and Saturdays, 8-10:30 a.m. Courts. 4-5